The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLVIII *June 25, 1948* NUMBER 11

THE WEEK 247

BEAUTY DOES NOT LOOK AFTER HERSELF *Eric Gill* 250

THE MUNDT-NIXON BILL *Christopher Emmet* 253

COMMUNICATIONS 256

Pacifism — Big Farm Strike — Outstretched Hand—Co-Ownership—Co-operation

CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS 259

THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 260

BOOKS 260

The Goebbels Diaries—A Long Fourth and Other Stories—Our Plundered Planet—Lenin—The Living Is Easy—Tobias Brandywine—The Moment—The Common Reader——From the Ashes of Disgrace

THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*

Published weekly and copyrighted 1948 in the U.S.A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1934, at the post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U.S. and Canada $6 a year. Foreign $7. Single copies 15¢

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, *Editor*

PHILIP BURNHAM, *Executive Editor*

C. G. PAULDING, *Managing Editor*

Associate Editors

John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Gregory Smith

Kappo Phelan, *Theater* Philip T. Hartung, *Cinema*

Corresponding Editor

Harry Lorin Binsse

Advertising Manager

John Brubaker

Stand-By in Palestine

THE STAND-BY in Palestine is a rarely pleasing development in years of trouble and strife. Knowledgeable people seem to feel the truce wouldn't have come, either, unless it were to be prolonged beyond the initial month. So much better. Few of the problems and differences which caused the strife seem to have been solved, but the expectation now that the Arabs and Jews are not going to fight about them for at least a month is relief indeed. Perhaps that constitutes as good a solution as can be hoped for in respect to many current difficulties.

Prince Bernadotte certainly did very well, as agent for the UN. In this particular instance, no major power sabotaged the UN and so it was gratifyingly effective. No long lessons are legitimate on the basis of this experience, unless, perhaps, that when the large problems of the large powers are not involved in immediate conflict, the UN can furnish a decent and effective means to control smaller strife among smaller nations. To the extent there is basic unity in the UN, and a sincere will to keep things calm, things are likely to be kept calm. It's an ambiguous proposition.

Palestine will not likely be a very wholesome place to live and bring up a family until the Jews and Arabs come to an adequate bilateral understanding. It is theoretically possible for them to do that on their own initiative, and one surely hopes they do. The question of sovereignty over the area of Palestine is a subtle and shadowy question with many terms involved which are not well defined. Whatever it may mean for the government of Israel or the neighboring Arab states, it is bound to be residual sovereignty—what may be left after the interplay of the forces of the major powers, after the work of UN, after the pressure of world religions, after the practical economic and technical arrangements which the local inhabitants have to make outside the bounds of Palestine in order to maintain a living. Whoever governs the territory of Israel will necessarily be hedged in by special working arrangements first of all with the surrounding Arab government or governments. The Jews and Arabs simply have to make day-to-day, practical agreements, or else try to shoot each other endlessly. And they can't even do that if the outside powers refuse to ship them shooting supplies, which do not grow in that area.

The problem of immigration into Palestine is probably the most exasperating one to be solved, and there is no solution satisfactory all around. But the problem has certain natural limits which have not been stressed enough even yet. The ability of Palestine to care for people is directly dependent upon the relations of the Jews to the Arabs. The number of immigrants Israel can accept is governed in large measure by the economic, political and social relationship which Israel develops with the Arabs around. Palestine does not lend itself geographically to densely populated autarchy. Then, the number of emigrants from the rest of the world aiming at Palestine depends, as apparently it can't be emphasized enough, on the rest of the world. The free circulation of peoples all over is an ideal to work for, at the same time that the ideal of forcing as few people as possible to want to circulate is kept equally alive.

The effort that is being made by some, and condoned by many more, to shape Israel into a wedge to drive between England and America, and between Jews and the Western States, appears to us altogether deplorable, and to be based on a false view. There is not room to argue it out at length here, but only to make a counter-remark or two. It is highly doubtful if American and British power in the Near East should be, or can be, separately identified. There are lines of political force there, and all over the world, which used to be sustained and activated largely by the English and which have gradually come to be empowered largely by the United States.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The only other formidable line of comparable force at work throughout the world and the Near East is the Soviet. The major purpose of the Soviet line is to break and shatter our line, and Palestine is simply a local area and means of operation for the Russians. Stalin's spectacular reversal of policy on Palestine and partition early in 1947 was only another temporary step in his secular battle with "the Anglo-Saxon powers." As David Dallin writes in the *New Leader*: "He suddenly realized that his chief aim of ousting the British from an important foothold could be accomplished by supporting a rapidly rising Jewish movement for national independence. . . . Soviet policy was primarily concerned with the establishment of an independent Jewish Palestine. A transformation of Israel into a 'friendly nation' remains scheduled for some future date. . . . The Zionists in Palestine are convinced that, in their endeavors in and outside of the United Nations, they have ably made use of the Soviet stand for their own benefit. Moscow, on the other hand, is convinced that it has succeeded in taking advantage of Zionism for the furtherance of its own ends in the Middle East." Moves to split England and America are moves to shatter the democratic front which also checks the Soviet communist force. That force reaches toward Israel as well as toward any other country which remains independent of the Stalin system. Israel and the Arab states, too, can reach their maximum liberty and dignity in collaboration with England and America and the other free countries of "the West," and not as our enemy, slipping into the tight, totalitarian framework of the aggressive Russian empire of "the East."

Peers vs People?

IT IS DIFFICULT for Americans to take the House of Lords seriously. Socially, of course, peers are unexceptionable, the focus of a tea, or the goal of a debutante; politically, however, they have ceased to be a peril since the passing of the unfortunate Lord North—just as kings have ceased to count since the overcrowded Mayflower removed certain persons from British shores twenty-seven years before his subjects removed the King of England's head. Gilbert & Sullivan, it is true, annually bring the peerage back into our gaslit, nostalgic ken, but few US citizens realize how truly momentous is the present battle-royal between the Labor majority in the Commons and the Conservative majority in the Lords.

When Herbert Morrison, the Lord President of the Council, moved the second reading of the Parliament Bill, he said it was unfair that a Conservative Government had no trouble with the Lords, whilst a progressive Government did, thus proving that the Labor Party regarded the House of Commons as synonymous with Parliament, and the House of Lords as a piece of mainly technical machinery to which the procedure of Parliament had to be adapted. This admission, indeed, lays the Labor Party open to Lord Salisbury's taunt that they harbor "a formidable group of single-chamber men" who form a "ruthless doctrinaire minority." The point at issue is a proposed change in the Parliament Act of 1911. As things stand at present, legislation may be passed into law, the Lords not withstanding, if passed by the House of Commons in three successive sessions, with two years elapsing between the time the Second Reading is proposed in the House of Commons, and the date it is there finally passed a second time. The Labor Party wishes to reduce the number of sessions to two; the number of years to one.

The recent all-party conference on the reform of the House of Lords broke down solely on this question of their delaying powers. It was obvious that the Lords had the right to initiate discussion, even to initiate legislation, as well as to reject and revise legislative proposals; all agreed that "they must not be mere delegates with ears to the ground to discover what was popular; they should be representatives trying to think out what was right." The deadlock occurred over Labor's proposal to narrow by three months the duration that both sides were prepared to accept for the delaying power. Nine months, cried Labor; a year, insisted the Lords. These three months imply much more than their apparent arithmetical power. "The longer period would have empowered the Upper House to postpone until after the General Election any measure sent up to them from the Commons in the last two sessions; the shorter period would have confined this power to the last session of all. Lord Jowitt, the Labor Lord Chancellor, and Lord Salisbury, the Conservative's mouthpiece, agreed this point was fundamental.

The immediate issue is, of course, the nationalization of iron and steel. Lord Jowitt holds the Labor Government still has a mandate derived from the General Election; Lord Salisbury suggests that the electors, in the light of the "not uniformly fortunate experience of nationalized industries" have perhaps changed their minds, and should be given a chance to say so on so major a proposal. In fact, the Conservatives wish to use the delaying power to force a referendum on the electorate; as Lord Salisbury put it, "there might be bills in the last year which would overlap the General Election. What was there very terrible in this? People would have an opportunity of deciding on a question at the polls, and this surely was democratic?" Churchill, abandoning Lord Salisbury's technique of sweet reasonableness, loudly declared the Government

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was afraid of the popular will. He mocked their acceptance of the hereditary principle: "One year's veto by a hereditary assembly is the true blue of social democracy; two years is class tyranny." Lord Jowitt countered by declaring that sovereignty could only be through representation, never through delegates.

The Conservatives, even their opponents agree, have been most insistent in demanding House of Lords reform, and the House of Lords itself has put forward sweeping and completely unselfish proposals for its own reorganization. Lord Salisbury, indeed, rose to Solomon-like stature in pleading that the Lords be reformed, but that the delaying power be saved for the Second Chamber which, it is proposed, shall be of life-peers only, eliminating the hereditary peers, including himself. Let Labor have the Second Chamber, only save it alive, he argued, since "the rights and liberties of the British people are at stake."

Parliament was conceived as a partnership, and, though no longer an equal partnership, it still consists of King, Lords and Commons. As the London *Times* points out, the peers fear that the predominant partner, as a majority controlling its own decisions, if it be sole judge of the limits of its own authority, may bring the country very near dictatorship, "without," as Churchill chuckled, "its efficiency or criminality." This is a curious reversal of rôles, with the peers defending the constitution from the all-powerful Commons. But once before, when the Commons overreached themselves, it was a king who was called out of exile to redress the balance. Perhaps the new crisis, Labor versus the Lords, may recall a parliamentary Cecil from Cranbourne to Chequers.

Brooklynese and American

WHEN you live on Manhattan Island in New York you have Brooklyn right across the East River, which is not a river, and the Bronx just north of the Harlem River, which is not a river, but even at four or five in the morning when there is a little less noise on Manhattan Island you cannot hear the people of Brooklyn talking—even if they are not asleep—or the people of the Bronx. And in the daytime when many of them come to work in Manhattan they do not wear any national dress, bright colored, or turbans, and when you ride with them up and down in the subway there is no way of knowing that they are foreigners. So that all the jokes about the Brooklyn accent and the peculiar speech which is said to prevail in the Bronx may be simple inventions, for all we know who live in Manhattan. We never hear them freshly for ourselves—only over the radio, when the comedians have no better jokes at hand.

It must be the same way if you live in the Bronx or in Brooklyn; you never hear the pretty speech of Manhattan's Fourteenth Street.

If it is true that the Five Boroughs of Greater New York have five different languages—and within each borough, fifty different dialects—all of them curiously enough sounding like English, then New York is the fine and richly diversified city we always thought it was. It is like America, with people speaking differently in the various regions, and everyone speaking naturally, without ever a Southerner thinking it would be distinguished to use the flat Boston A, without ever a Yankee envying the Texan, and with no one anywhere in America ever supposing for an instant that there was a standard American voice, intonation, accent, rhythm of speech to which he must conform or be—in the ghastly jargon of cheap advertising—"socially incorrect."

We thought that things were all right in America and in New York. But it appears that some New Yorkers are worried about the speech habits —scientific jargon—of other New Yorkers, those whom of course they view as ill-favored. There is a movement afoot—jargon of the cliché—to set the public schools at work unifying the speech of all their pupils, so that they will all sound alike when they open their mouths, so that they will all sound alike when, later on, they apply for jobs and, after they get the jobs, they will all sound alike when they talk to the customer. Eventually all the customers will sound alike. And in this planned society a New Yorker will be a New Yorker and there will never be another joke about Brooklyn, the Bronx—or even Park Avenue.

People are always worrying about the cultural life of our school children instead of beating their little behinds and making them learn the multiplication table. The old schoolhouse has gone and, higher up, Latin and Greek have gone. But this latest attempt to waste time is not as alarming as many others for, certainly, it will fail.

Were it to succeed it would be the start of a process through which all Americans would be made self-conscious for generations. No young executive would ever be able casually to bring home to dinner the vice-president of his company —even if he had canned soups ready for this emergency, even if the paper napkins matched the paper table cloth—because there might always be the dreadful moment when his wife, forgetting all that she had been taught under the new system in school, would say the words, make the sounds, that her father and mother, her grandfather and grandmother, had said and made before her, and thus reveal the horrid fact that she was born somewhere in particular rather than anywhere in general.

It is hard enough just with Emily Post—who has made more people unnecessarily miserable than can be counted. It is hard enough to look and behave and be dressed like every other American—and to learn how to carry a tray in the cafeteria. Leave use let language alone.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beauty Does Not Look After Herself

Eric Gill

TO 'THE CRITERION'*

Jerusalem 10th May 1934

SIR: I am honoured by Mr. Penty's attack on me (Criterion, April, 1934) and shall be honoured if you will allow me to answer it.

I am not disturbed by the charge of inconsistency. Apparent inconsistency is unavoidable—and, I might say, proverbial. If I say 'too many cooks spoil the broth' and then hasten to add 'but many hands make light work' I may appear more inconsistent than I am. If I say 'look before you leap' and then 'he that hesitates is lost' Mr. Penty will be confused, but the discerning will understand. So one may deplore the lack of sensibility in the parish clergy and their readiness to assume that modern painting is the work of either imbeciles or charlatans and yet still believe that aesthetic education is no part of the curriculum of seminaries. 'The public must be educated' said the leaders of the arts and crafts movement, meaning educated in aesthetics; I say rather that the public should be educated in faith and morals. I do not expect Mr. Penty to agree, but to me it is clear that commercialism, dishonesty, avarice, self-will and self-esteem, conceit, vanity, love of luxury and ostentation on the one hand (i.e. moral failings) and stupidity, blindness, and every kind of silliness on the other (i.e. intellectual failings) are more damaging to civilization and culture and therefore to art (i.e. the making of things—for art is not merely the making of paintings and sculptures and buildings) than any lack of art-school training or *ad hoc* cultural education.

Mr. Penty does not like the idea that beauty proceeds from truth and goodness. He admits the possibility that 'in the final consummation morals and aesthetics may be one' (though he does not explain why the word morals should be taken as equivalent to the two words truth and goodness), but meanwhile he clings to 'taste' and 'aesthetic perception' and 'a keen sense of line and colour' (curious indeterminate words upon which art critics, as initiates of a mystery, depend for their livings) and will not see that tables and chairs and buildings and carriages are not primarily objects of aesthetic satisfaction.

One of our troubles is the confusion of mind in which we fail to distinguish one art from another. There is the art of living. Of this art the saints, both canonized and otherwise, are the exponents (and, we must remember, the saint is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of saint). There is the art of cooking and that of building. There is the art of husbandry and that of singing (and, again we must remember, 'the artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist'). But when we say that beauty proceeds from truth and goodness we mean that beauty proceeds from good sense and good will. We do not mean that the good carpenter never beats his wife any more than that the bad carpenter always does (though we agree with Mr. Penty that, *in the long run,* a really good carpenter is sure to be a decent sort of man—I mean you can't do work suitable for human use if you are an inhuman sort of person). We mean that to make a good table you must first of all have a good idea of a table in your head; you must know precisely what a table is; you must know the truth about tables and your mind must be such that you can see a vision of the table before you make it and your vision must be conformed to the truth of table-making.

But, obviously, such good sense is not enough. You must also have goodwill. That is to say you must strongly desire the table you have imagined and your will must be equable and firm and persistent. You must not allow yourself to be put off by this trifle or that—by this irrelevance or the other. Good sense, strong will, surely these are obvious necessities (though not so obvious, alas, to Mr. Penty). And the enemies of good sense and strong will, are they not all the common enemies of truth and goodness? If our minds are nurtured in falsehood and our lives in hatred and selfishness is it likely that we shall bring good sense and good will into our workshops?

Mr. Penty says we are familiar with 'the spectacle of people single-hearted in their devotion to goodness and truth, yet without a scrap of taste or aesthetic perception'. But in saying that he is only making confusion. For in the finity of human powers few men and women can claim to have devotion to all possible applications of the true and the good, and a man devoted to religion, to

* This letter is taken from "Letters of Eric Gill," to be published this summer in America by Devin-Adair.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

visiting the fatherless and the widows in their tribulation, may perhaps have neither time nor inclination to visit the Gothic cathedrals or the National Gallery. All the same, the builders and the painters must also be devoted to the true and the good or they will be bad builders and bad painters.

Mr. Penty says aesthetics cannot be explained in the terms of morals. I did not say they could. I said aesthetics were to be explained in terms of the mind. I said that the faculties of the mind are the intelligence and the will and that therefore, the object of the intelligence being the truth and that of the will being the good, aesthetics were to be explained in terms of truth and goodness. Mr. Penty's identification of truth and goodness with morals alone leads him unto his morass. Ugly churches do certainly imply a bad civilization and beautiful banks would certainly imply a good one (though it is perhaps difficult to conceive of the trade of money-lending leading to anything but grandiosity), but we need not judge the Christians of to-day by the church architecture of to-day any more than we need judge the shopkeepers of to-day by the architects of to-day. We must be just a little bit careful. The matter is not so simple. A saint must buy bread; it is not necessarily his fault if the only bread available be a Viennese bun. The usurer must have a shelter; it is not always his merit if the only building available be a disused temple. We must return again and again to the first principles. Whatever job we are confronted by, we must first ask ourselves *what* is it; we must find out the *truth* of the matter. We must then consider *why* it is; whether it be worth while, very desirable, a *good* thing, an object of love. Taste, aesthetics, the styles of architecture! These things can be discovered afterwards by the critics. Let the workman stick to his job and use his intelligence and his good will.

Perhaps Mr. Penty's chief difficulty is in the matter of industrialism and perhaps that is because he is an architect. Architects more than other people suffer from the difficulty of adjusting their minds to the facts of modern commerce and manufacture. 'Beauty looks after herself' is a saying more difficult for architects than for other people to swallow. They are in a special sense trained and paid to look after 'beauty'. If beauty is going to look after herself their trade is largely gone. The builder and the engineer can build; you only call in the architect because, after three centuries of commercial rule, you do not expect either builder or engineer to have any ideas but those of profit and utilitarianism. The architect is beauty's professional custodian. Hence all his business of Gothic and Classic, style and orders of architecture and all the paraphernalia of office draughtsmanship and museum study. The march of commerce and applied science has passed him by and left him in a blind alley or, rather, left him with nothing but the appearances of things.

I am not saying that the architect is not concerned with plans and construction; I am only saying that those things are not his *raison d'etre* —either historically or in fact to-day. Hence his indignation when you say beauty looks after herself. Beauty! why it's his stock in trade; it's his specialty; the one thing he's quite sure he knows about and the one thing he's really proud of. So Mr. Penty thinks I'm an iconoclast moved by 'colossal folly' and he cannot understand how a person who sees the inhumanity of industrialism can yet see beauty in the characteristic products of machinery as well as in the characteristic products of modern painters and sculptors.

I am afraid this cannot be helped. You cannot make a man see by writing a book. But at least you can tell him a few home truths. Architecture is a social art. Buildings are not built in the architect's office but on the job. They are not built by draughtsmen but by the contractor and his 'hands'. Whether Mr. Penty likes it or not, buildings to-day are not built by men but by mechanics and machines. And they are not made of 'natural' materials but, more and more, of manufactured or artificial materials—iron and steel, reinforced concrete, artificial stone and glass. Mr. Penty may not like all these things—that won't stop them being used. Mr. Penty may prefer a horse and trap—that won't make it easy for him to get one or safe to drive it on a road made for motor cars and surrounded by them.

Now Mr. Penty's difficulty is this: Industrialism is a bad thing; how can it produce good works? It is the same difficulty as that posed by the moralist when he asks how an immoral painter can paint good portraits. Mr. Penty is very scornful of the moralist; why can he not see that his own question is a similar one? What do we mean when we say Industrialism is a bad thing? We mean that it is bad for *men*. It reduces the workman to a subhuman condition of intellectual irresponsibility. It deprives him of what had hitherto been his pride, his responsibility as a craftsman, a man skilled in handiwork, and it deprives him of his responsibility as a citizen, a man dealing independently (or in accordance with the regulations of his guild) with his own customers —the servant not of an impersonal Joint Stock company but of the persons for whom he actually makes his goods. And so on—I am not writing a book or I would say much more.* I say Industrialism deprives the workman of these things and that these things are necessary to men; for men are rational souls and not mere 'hands'.

* See on this subject my little book *Art*, Twentieth Century Library, John Lane, 2s. 6d.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For these reasons and many others Industrialism is a bad thing for men and the plethora of cheap manufactures is no compensation for the loss of the workman's responsibility. But it does not follow that all machines and all machine-made things are bad things. A locomotive, a motor car, properly designed (i.e. designed in accordance with the nature of such things and not designed in imitation of horse-drawn carriages), a telephone, a typewriter, a fountain pen, plain linen, plain brick or concrete buildings, iron bridges—all such things, when properly designed, are good things, and as they are pleasing when seen, we may rightly call them beautiful. Men are sacrificed but the goods are goods. They are a different kind of goods, but goods none the less, and while we continue the industrial system we may as well have the best it can do rather than imitations of pre-industrial things. Industrialism means the reduction of workmen to a subhuman condition but subhuman things are not bad things in themselves. A beehive is not a bad thing, an insect is an admirable mechanism, bones and beetles are constructed purely in accordance with function and are beautiful to behold. The inspiration of Industrialism is also a functional inspiration. Both Mr. Penty and I may regret the institution, but neither of us can stay its course and it seems certain that it will reach its term the quicker the less we camouflage it.

I am sorry Mr. Penty introduced the personal business. I must needs answer him. In the matter of lettering he says my work is based upon the inscription on Trajan's column. He is quite wrong. (He ought to go and look at that inscription—there is a cast in the V. and A. Museum). It is true that as a student I was taught to study Roman inscriptions, but as soon as I got down to doing real inscriptions for real tombstones I saw the folly of going back to old models. I told my apprentices, and I've said it in books and lectures countless time, that we have to take the lettering of our own time and, if necessary, improve it by rationality and good workmanship. My inscriptions are no more like the Trajan than Caslon's type is.

Mr. Penty says my sculpture is 'inspired by the Primitives' and some are 'even archaic'! The implication is that I am working in a primitive style on purpose—because I like it. The facts are quite otherwise. *I work the only way I can.* If I like primitive sculptures more than, shall I say, late Greek or modern Royal Academy sculptures, it is simply because they seem to me more in harmony with the nature of man and religion and the nature of stone carving—they are more reasonable and better done; their attention to truth and goodness more obvious and complete. But that I have ever worked deliberately in a primitive or archaic manner is not true; I took to carving after ten years as a letter cutter and, having no 'art school' training and having never drawn from 'the life' in my life, my carvings were inevitably of the kind Mr. Penty calls 'even archaic.' Some people think I ought never to have done them; other people said 'no, go on; it's time we broke away from the superstitions of the art school'. People bought my stones and ordered more—naturally I went on.

I am not going to follow Mr. Penty into the question of the goodness or badness of reinforced concrete as a building material or as a method of building. It may be as bad as he says it is, or it may be as good as it is said to be by other people of equal intelligence and even wider experience. I do not set myself up as an expert in the technical question and obviously it is for us a new material and a new method and one not yet fully tried out. But I cannot see why it should not be experimented with, especially as the results of contemporary experiment already show many grand and pleasing works (e.g. the new bridge at Cologne, the church at Le Raincy and the Horticultural Hall, Westminster. I may mention also, as Mr. Penty so much admires the design, that Mr. Edward Maufe's Guildford Cathedral is to have a reinforced concrete vault similar to that of his new church at Hanwell). Mr. Penty's attitude is very priggish and it is simply silly to say that the modern use of concrete is nothing but the result of a cement manufacturer's ramp.

Another excellent reason for the use of concrete for building is its obvious suitability to the industrialization of labour. The reinforced concrete building is the Industrialist building *par excellence.* Let us get on with the experiment; meanwhile I am not hindered from saying on all possible occasions that Industrialism, whatever the grandeur of its products, is ultimately incompatible with the nature of men. It will come to its end not because its products offend the old-fashioned architect but because it offends humanity.

But, good or bad, concrete is not the only material even in an industrial world. I have done carvings in concrete and am willing to do as many more as I am asked for. But stone, whether natural or artificial, and wood and all kinds of metal are also available. I do not carve in stone for aesthetic or sentimental reasons but simply because that is the material to hand or the material ordered by my customers. (Mr. Penty asks if I do not think concrete is 'an inartistic material'. What a question, what a phrase! He might as well ask if I don't think iron inartistic, or glass, or putty.)

Then Mr. Penty goes on to talk about a 'cult of ugliness'. I shall not follow him into this discussion either. The beautiful, the ugly! The beautiful is that which being seen pleases, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ugly that which displeases. Mr. Penty is displeased by such and such; therefore, without more ado, he calls it ugly. It is precisely this kind of deadlock that compels us to go back to rational principles—to principles of good sense and good will—in order to discover the grounds of pleasure and the nature of the act of seeing. For when a man's mind is disordered his pleasure or displeasure are of no importance in an argument. Let the art-critics have their little game. We, workmen, are too busy making things that are wanted as well as we are able to bother about whether what we make is beautiful or ugly.

Mr. Penty yearns for a revival of art patronage. But every man who spends money on things made by men is a patron of art. Again, it is precisely the artificial division of human works into art and not art which compels us to return to first principles. Let the so-called patrons of art continue to buy paintings and sculptures at absurd prices and let us forget about them.

I must leave the matter thus. Mr. Penty and I live in quite different worlds. His letter is, to me, nothing but 'art nonsense'. The arts, he says, are in peril! What nonsense this is. The arts are never in peril. If one art languishes another flourishes. If old fashioned drawing-board-Gothic architects are being discarded so much the better. There are more rational people to take their place. I don't believe in his high art nonsense about the architect being a prophet. The architect is simply the ruler of workmen—and he would be a useful member of society if he would build buildings as they are required and use whatever materials are available to the best of his intelligence and ability without bothering about either the past or the future or the critics. (And the same applies to sculptors and all makers of images.)
Yours faithfully, ERIC GILL.

The Mundt-Nixon Bill

CHRISTOPHER EMMET

THE CAMPAIGN against the Mundt-Nixon bill to combat Communism reached its climax with the so-called march on Washington, where various pro-Communist and pro-Wallace groups carried on a rowdy and recklessly untruthful agitation against the bill. It is regrettable but not surprising that Paul Robeson was a leading figure, just as he is the leading figure in the Communist-supported maneuver to gain control of the Council on African Affairs from Dr. Max Yergen and Mrs. Mary McCleod Bethune, venerable Negro woman leader.

It is hard to believe that this hysterical, Communist-led agitation could be effective either with Congress or with public opinion, because none of the leaders in the march on Washington could possibly express a disinterested opinion about the bill. They have a personal axe to grind since the Mundt-Nixon bill would force them from now on to travel under their true colors.

One would suppose that American liberals, whatever their view of the wisdom of the bill itself, would be indignant at the lies told about it by its leading opponents, for to allow such a campaign of gross and unlimited misrepresentation to pass unchallenged is a threat to the whole democratic process. And, obviously, non-Communist liberals who are not committed to the Mundt-Nixon bill are in the best position to denounce this smear campaign against it.

Here is a typical paragraph from one of the pamphlets issued by a group which is not openly identified with the Communist Party:

> Do you want to go to jail because you want world unity and peace, because you want a third political party, because you support a Palestine partition, because you strike for higher wages, because you oppose universal military training, because you are against a Jim Crow army? Does your organization disagree with Rankin? If so, it must register as a foreign agent and must label itself a Communist front organization. Unions refusing to sign Taft-Hartley Act affidavits would come under this clause. Jail sentences are provided for men and women if they go on strike. It sounds incredible but it is true. These laws are now pending in Congress. Rush funds to our Committee."

Not one of these statements is true. The Mundt-Nixon bill does not outlaw the Communist Party, as Governor Dewey showed in his debate with Stassen. It requires that unless the party is willing to sever all connections with Moscow it must register with the Department of Justice as an agent of a foreign government and must turn its membership list over to the Department of Justice.

As I said, one would imagine that these tactics against the bill would have aroused indignation not only among more conservative Americans, but among non-Communist liberals, but there has been no such reaction. On the contrary, we find a liberal newspaper, the New York *Post,* loudly vying with the Communists in its reckless denunciations of the bill. In an editorial on June 10th it said:

> By placing the power to determine what citizens, or what group of citizens, hold thoughts dangerous to the United States in the hands of the Attorney General, it would effectively suspend the Bill of Rights and open the door to wholesale imprisonment of critics and dissenters, whether from the far Right, the center or the far Left. It would throttle free speech and dam expression of minority thought. It creates the very kind of dangers it pretends to oppose. It is vicious, and its provisions would threaten every citizen.

We even find so forthright a liberal as Leon

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Henderson, chairman of Americans for Democratic Action, working feverishly to defeat the bill by propounding the implausible theory that the Communist Party wants the bill passed! Actually, the Communists have probably spent more money fighting the Mundt-Nixon bill than in any similar agitation in recent years. There is every reason to believe that they have spent the money precisely because the Mundt-Nixon bill does *not* outlaw the Communist Party, but does curb Communist underground activities by forcing them to register and to report their members and contributors, thus drying up some of their secret sources of funds. It is this new approach of the bill which makes it dangerous to Communists, and confusing to liberals.

Henderson justifies his theory that the Communists want the Mundt-Nixon bill passed on the ground that the bill would arouse so much sympathy for the Communists that liberals would unite with them against it. But if this is true, will it not be because most liberals have been grossly misinformed about the details of the bill, and because liberals like Mr. Henderson have not exposed or refuted the lies which are told about it?

How many members, or even how many officers, of some of the liberal organizations which have criticized the bill have actually read it, or have even studied a complete summary of all its provisions? How many of them realize that the bill was written by two of the most intelligent and progressive Republican members of Congress—Representative Karl Mundt and Representative Richard Nixon? In Mundt's home state a few weeks ago he was overwhelmingly nominated for the job of U. S. Senator on the Republican ticket. He is the man who led the fight against the Republican economizers in Congress who wanted to scuttle the Voice of America program. As for Nixon, he is a rising young congressman who has impressed Congress and the press with his intelligence and sincerity, and with the superiority of his understanding of Communism over the cruder approach of such veteran members as Parnell Thomas, not to speak of the former leaders of the House Un-American Activities Committee, who were greatly inferior to Mr. Thomas. In the state of California, Congressman Nixon not only won renomination on his own ticket but also won the nomination on the Democratic ticket.

★

None can deny that there are controversial aspects to the Mundt-Nixon bill, or that some of its provisions may go too far. But when lifelong champions of civil liberties, such as Elmer Davis, A. A. Berle, Jr., Walter Millis, Father John LaFarge and John Foster Dulles, express approval of at least some of its most important provisions, we can see how fantastic the lies of the Communist Party or the exaggerations of Leon Henderson really are.

Because distortion and emotionalism have been so widespread, let us look at the actual provisions of the bill as outlined recently in the May 29th issue of *America*:

> The main provisions of the bill, passed by the House, 319 to 58, on May 19th, may be summarized as follows:
>
> 1. Congress makes a finding of fact that there exists a worldwide conspiracy to set up totalitarian dictatorships under the control of a single foreign power; that this conspiracy operates in the United States; that it presents a 'clear and present danger' to our democratic freedoms and our national security.
>
> 2. The bill defines 'communist political organizations' and 'communist front organizations'. The acid test is not that certain doctrines or policies are adopted, but that the organization is under the control of a foreign power in the interests of world communism; or in the case of 'front' organizations, that they are controlled by, or exist primarily to aid, the political organization.
>
> 3. The bill penalizes heavily any attempt to establish in the United States a totalitarian government under foreign control; all acts intended to facilitate the establishing of such a totalitarian government; participation in 'the management, direction or supervision' of any movement aiming at one of the foregoing; or conspiracy to violate any of these prohibitions.
>
> 4. Communist political organizations must register annually with the Attorney General (a) the name under which they operate; (b) the names of their officers; (c) the names of their members. Communist-front organizations must register their names and officers, but not their membership. These registration lists are to be open for public inspection.
>
> 5. The Attorney General may investigate a suspect organization to determine whether it is subject to registration. The organization may appeal his finding to the U. S. District Court in Washington and to the Supreme Court.
>
> 6. Failure to register an organization, and membership in an unregistered communist political organization—but not in a communist-front organization—subjects the offenders to fine and imprisonment.
>
> 7. Registered organizations, if they use the mails or the radio, must clearly identify their literature or programs as emanating from a 'communist organization.'
>
> 8. Registered organizations lose tax exemption, and contributions to them are not deductible for income tax purposes. Members of communist political organizations are ineligible for Federal employment, and may not receive or use United States passports. Conviction of any of the acts listed under number 3, above, entails loss of citizenship.

America went on to comment: "The intent behind these provisions is simple enough. The bill does not aim at hampering any legitimate po-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

litical activity. Americans are left free to hold and promote Marxist doctrines, if they so desire. What the Mundt bill tries to do is to prevent a foreign power from using our political machinery, our mails and our radio to its own nefarious ends. In so far as any Americans lend themselves to the international Communist conspiracy, the bill forces them to do so openly and denies them those political facilities which honest citizens enjoy.

"In the *New York Times* for May 19, Anne O'Hare McCormick gave it as 'a conclusion that cannot be too heavily underlined' that 'the present struggle is 'the war.' If the political battle is won, there is little likelihood of a military conflict.' That is the paramount consideration."

This summary comes from a Catholic weekly which has been one of the most consistent and effective supporters of an enlightened American foreign policy from lend-lease to the Marshall Plan. It has been strong for world government and disarmament, never hysterically anti-Communist. Because Catholics, like other minorities, are ardent supporters of the Bill of Rights which defends their own religious freedom, *America's* opinion that the Mundt-Nixon bill is in line with the spirit of the constitution is highly significant.

A more detailed and complete analysis of the bill's provisions is contained in a special supplement put out by the excellent newsletter, *Counterattack,* which publishes facts to combat Communism. Their address is 55 West 42nd Street, New York City.

What has been said about the disreputable nature of the campaign against the bill does not, of course, apply to all of the individuals or organizations which oppose it. The Civil Liberties Union, for instance, which despite occasional errors of judgment has rendered a real service to American democracy, strongly opposes the bill. Roger Baldwin, Morris Ernst and Arthur Garfield Hays have earned our gratitude by many a brave fight for the underdog—such as the weeks of time which Hays freely gave to the Committee for a Fair Trial for Draja Mihailovich, with which the writer was associated. There is no question about the sincerity of their faith in untrammeled freedom, and Roger Baldwin proved his consistency when he even went to bat for Fritz Kuhn during the period of the cold war with Hitler, although Nazi ideas were anathema to everything Baldwin had fought for all his life. Nevertheless, we may question Baldwin's judgment in thinking that the procedures which he disapproved in Kuhn's arrest and conviction were more important than the menace to freedom which at that time the Bund and its allies represented.

The Union's attitude, like that of many lawyers, is purely negative on all questions of anti-Communist or anti-Fascist legislation. It has proposed no alternative or amendments to the Mundt-Nixon bill. Its leading spirits are non-Communist, rather than anti-Communist, and seem committed to the dogma that free speech is a complete answer to the new techniques of the totalitarian conspiracy. Under normal conditions they are probably right. Certainly the healthier and stronger a democracy is, the more it can afford to grant freedom even to subversive groups. Nevertheless, Canada is a great and, on the whole, a flourishing democracy, and so was Czechoslovakia, yet we know what happened there. The era of the atom bomb and the cold war are not "normal."

*

The Civil Liberties Union is subject to another criticism when it expresses its opinion on legislation to curb Communism. For although since its purge of Communists the great majority of its directors have been fine non-Communist liberals, it still includes such a dyed-in-the-wool apologist for Stalin as Corliss Lamont on its board, as well as several members of the National Committee who have been consistent advocates of the appeasement of Soviet Russia, and/or sponsors of various groups listed as Communist front by the Attorney General. However well-meaning they may be, such individuals can scarcely be regarded as impartial or realistic judges of the Mundt-Nixon bill, which is designed to expose such groups. Among the committee members or directors of the Civil Liberties Union who fall in this category are Dorothy Kenyon, Max Lerner, Aubrey Williams, Vida D. Scudder, Bishop F. Bromley Oxnam, Carey McWilliams and Robert Morss Lovett. Of course the presence of a small minority of members who are not sound on the Communist problem does not destroy the usefulness of the Union in the many fields of its work which are not concerned with Communism. But it does greatly reduce the value of its opinion in that one important field with which we are concerned here.

By including such a pro-Communist as Corliss Lamont on its board of directors, not to speak of others who are frequent sponsors of pro-Communist fronts, the Civil Liberties Union not only virtually commits itself against endorsing any effective anti-Communist legislation, but *it also excludes the only known substitutes for legislation against Communism, that is, the private exposure and boycott of Communists.* The inclusion of Lamont would seem to imply the view that the Communist movement is bona fide and respectable, rather than a worldwide conspiracy in the service of an aggressive government. So it is not just a case of the Civil Liberties Union differing with the methods of the Mundt-Nixon bill in opposing Communism. The effect of the Union's attitude is more far-reaching.

This conclusion is supported by the fact that the Civil Liberties Union is avowedly willing to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

co-ordinate its activities with the Communists in opposition to the Mundt-Nixon bill, or on other similar questions. This again implies recognition of the Communist Party as a respectable group, for if the Civil Liberties Union co-operates with them why shouldn't others? It indicates the belief that any dangers from Communism are negligible compared to the dangers of the Mundt-Nixon bill. Thus, even the personal and economic boycott, which was used so effectively against the Nazis and Bundists, is excluded by their tactics.

It is hard to see how Morris Ernst, who has championed the exposure and the isolation of Communists, can reconcile himself with this position. For the theory of the bill that Communists must fly under their own colors would seem to be more in line with Ernst's past attitude than is that of his own organization—even though Ernst disapproves other parts of the bill.

It is not a question of fearing a Communist *coup d'état* in America now if they are not curbed. It is a question of the Communists' ability to confuse, bedevil, sabotage and delay every kind of constructive American policy, at a time when world peace and freedom depend on generous, firm and united action by America. They do this with the help of Soviet money when it is needed, and with the guidance and co-operation of Soviet parties throughout the world. They do it under the guise of deception and false labels, such as the American Labor Party, labels which confuse innocent Americans.

★

No one who, like the writer, witnessed the triumph of Hitler in Germany and who remembers how far that triumph was due to the overtolerance and respect for the legal rights of the Nazis, as citizens under the German constitution, can subscribe to the dogmatic view of the Civil Liberties Union that no new legislation of a restrictive sort is ever necessary or possible to defend democracy, except in time of war. The cold war is a totalitarian invention which must be dealt with by new methods.

In the Stassen debate, Governor Dewey said of the Mundt-Nixon bill: "I have some doubts about the constitutionality of some of its provisions. If they're constitutional, that's swell." But when there is reasonable doubt about whether some otherwise desirable piece of legislation is constitutional, that is a question which can be properly left to the courts, and it cannot be put up to them until Congress adopts the legislation. The argument about constitutionality was frequently used by conservative critics of various social reform measures which are now part of the law of the land, accepted by Republicans nad Democrats alike, although some measures failed to make the grade.

There is therefore no legal or moral objection to such legislation as the Mundt-Nixon bill. The one consideration should be whether it will actually serve its purpose of weakening and hampering the Communist conspiracy, without indirectly arousing so much sympathy for the Communists as to do them more good than harm in the long run.

Here the organized misrepresentation of the bill plays a key part. Can we explain the Mundt-Nixon bill so that the public will understand its real provisions, and are there ways of amending it which would make it more effective, or less subject to misunderstanding? On both these questions there is room for honest difference and debate. But to engage in a hysterical smear campaign against such a well-intentioned and vitally needed piece of legislation, which has made a new and original approach to the Communist problem, would be a tragic miscarriage of the democratic process and a major victory for the Communists.

The Mundt-Nixon bill does not drive the Communists underground. On the contrary, the bill forces the Communists and their stooges who are now working underground to come further into the open. The main Communist leaders are already known by the FBI. They could not go underground without being arrested, and their arrest would dry up the funds and hamper the machinery of the Communist conspiracy. Many qualified experts are inclined to believe that the benefits from the bill, whether the Communists register under it or not, would counterbalance any false sympathy which Communist lies about the bill might produce.

We have a certain precedent in the hysteria among liberals which accompanied the Taft-Hartley bill, a more doubtful measure, in the writer's view. We were told that most labor leaders would defy the act and that there would be mass arrests. Under the Mundt-Nixon bill the Attorney General would have considerable discretion on whether or not to take action in borderline cases. There would be every inducement to go slow to avoid the risk of reversal by the courts, which would have the last word. Even if the key Communist leaders chose to go to jail rather than register, they would not be martyrs except to their blind followers who follow them anyway. From jail their trained guidance of the conspiracy would be impossible.

Communications

PACIFISM

South Bend, Ind.

TO the Editor: The editorial of your May 28th issue describes in friendly terms the uncomprising pacifism of the *Catholic Worker*. It stresses the fact that this pacifism was voiced "right through the days of the bitter struggle with the Axis, when refusal to fight meant

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jail or a CO camp for the duration."

This noble language involves a distortion of the real events. It would be more accurate to say that a tolerant government gave a certain category of deserters the benefit of invincible ignorance and merely confined them, thus sparing them the punishment customarily inflicted on deserters in time of war. Further, when emphasis is laid upon what "refusal to fight meant," politeness toward the men killed in action demands that the reader should not be allowed to forget what was meant by willingness to fight.

On the other hand, it is suggested that US citizens who refuse to defend the US and the world against such enemies as Nazi Germany and Communist Russia may have a better excuse than invincible ignorance. For the editorial goes on: "Absolute pacifism has a long and honored tradition in the Church."

"Pacifism" is an ambiguous word. But the expression "absolute pacifism" is unambiguous: it designates the doctrine and attitude of those who deny that a war can be just, and consequently refuse participation in any war, even in a war aimed at saving the US and the world from domination by Naziism or Communism.

A teacher of Ethics, I was taught and I do teach that the Church has a definite doctrine on the subject of the just war, and that this doctrine implies the rejection of absolute pacifism. I am unaware of the existence of a "long and honored tradition" of absolute pacifism in the Church. May I ask you to substantiate your statement on this point? YVES R. SIMON.

I presume that the person who wrote this appreciation of the "Catholic Worker" *had in mind that through the ages numerous Christian individuals and groups, such as martyrs and monks and missionaries, who were committed in their whole lives to follow as closely as possible the counsels of perfection outlined in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere in the life of Our Lord, have followed a flat rule not to bear arms, wage war and kill or main people, nor even go to bed angry—and these persons and their way of life have traditionally been honored by the Christian community. Pacifism, crusades, war, means for the resistance to evil and the propagation of good, etc. are large and anxious subjects, which this magazine will not be able to avoid treating piecemeal as troubled times go by. If there be a "definite doctrine," a dogmatic statement of the Church that a teacher of Ethics can furnish to* COMMONWEAL *readers and writers, which will answer the recurrent questions of peace and violence perpetually presented to the individual responsible conscience,* THE COMMONWEAL *would rejoice in publishing it.* P. B.

BIG FARM STRIKE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: The other night I had a Kafka-like dream. I had just read the article on the agricultural strike out in California (in issue of June 4th) and was so deeply disturbed by it that it affected my sleep. It is seldom that I dream, but when I do, it is usually clear and to the point, having to do with something that has been going on in my daily life.

Everybody had had speaking engagements recently, and the kind of engagements where there was not much response, not even enough to pay one's carfare to and from the speaking place, not even enough to elicit a few subscriptions.

In my dreams I thought I was speaking to our own parish, which is an Italian one on Baxter Street. There is a big hall downstairs with a stage, and a bar at one side, and I don't know if they have parties there, or what kind of parties there are. The place is very shabby and badly needs a coat of paint. It is a rather dreary place for young people, and when we tried to induce some of our workers around the house of hospitality to volunteer to paint it, they said they did not approve of the bar, that it was a reminder and an occasion of temptation to them. Bars were all right in their place, on the Bowery, but not in halls under the Church, directly under the Blessed Sacrament. There may never have been any drinking there, but when they have raffles at the Church on Mott Street there are always bottles of whiskey raffled off as well as automobiles. Another Church I knew of had had such beer parties that people had to be carried home.

During my dream the bar was in use. There was also a ramp down the side of the hall and cars kept coming in and out. They might have been new cars to be raffled, or then again they might have been our two cars which we had been joking about. Two cars in every garage and a chicken in every pot. We had just eaten the backs of chicken cooked up with rice as a cheap meat dish for our Sunday dinner at the farm, and some friends had just donated not one but two cars, a 1924 Columbia and a 1932 Chevrolet. Tommy and Johanna Hughes had been praying for them, and sure enough they arrived!

In my dream, the cars kept coming in and out, and they sounded like Mack trucks so I could not make myself heard, though the people crowded the hall and seemed to be listening attentively. I was trying to tell them about the strike in California and about how the huge business factory farm was owned by an Italian family, and I kept thinking, "I should not mention that, because maybe they are sensitive like the Irish and the Jews. And yet I must mention it, because they will feel a greater obligation to help."

Thousands of people on strike, and needing help, going without food, perhaps, running the risk of being beaten up, even of losing their lives, in a long drawn battle between capital and labor. A battle in which every means was used by the owners, every lie was employed, the impression given that the workers lived in spacious sunny houses, with plenty of fruit and sunshine and space and work. An impression that the owners were small farmers, a community of farmers standing for all that was good and Christian in American life. These people need help, I kept thinking, and I cannot make myself heard. "Too much eatings and too much drinkings," as one of the dear priests at that same Church used to say, when he urged the Lenten fast on us.

When I woke up, I thought to myself, these people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to whom I was speaking are those who live by pennies, from push carts, from hard work at the fish markets, driving trucks, taxis, etc. Why not write and urge THE COMMONWEAL, to solicit funds for the strikers. The readers of the magazine can all help a little. A dollar here and there piles up. We are not really living the Kafka life. During our years of Trial, our tribunal is not a grim one. We go regularly before our judge whenever we go to confession, and regularly we receive pardon. Our religion is a religion of mercy, and the works of mercy can express our love of our brothers. So let us all help the strikers and send them a message of congratulations on their courage and fortitude, and whatever we can as a gift for their soup kitchens. People need to eat, even during their "periods of repose," which they will be calling strikes next, as well as periods of unemployment between harvests. DOROTHY DAY.

Contributions may be sent to John Haynes Holmes, Chairman, Citizens Committee on the Di Giorgio Strike, Room 905, 112 East 19th St., New York 3, N. Y. —THE EDITORS.

OUTSTRETCHED HAND

Paris, France.

TO the Editors: It was a real pleasure for me, and for many friends of mine, to read in your issue of April 30, 1948, the communication of Claire Huchet Bishop, entitled "Why Silence." I was, and many French Catholics are, anxious to hear from those United States where Catholicism seems to be in a so hopeful upward way, a voice which should claim the transcendency of the Christian message against any attempt of political annexation. And when I read, in the same issue of THE COMMONWEAL, in an advertisement on the second (cover) page, that Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen "offers his weapons for fighting communism," beside an article where "Vatican's political defensive" is mentioned, I doubly appreciate Mrs. Bishop's attitude.

In France, too, from many pulpits of our churches we are urged to join the anti-communist crusade, just as during the war it was demonstrated to us that *"Pétain c'est las France et la France c'est Pétain."* But today, as yesterday, we cannot forget which interests these watchwords represent. And this is the reason why many French Catholics do not accept these watchwords.

Mrs. Bishop speaks of France, but she must not forget that Franco was not received as a savior by all the Spanish Catholics. The Basque Catholics, especially, behind their Archbishop, Monsignor Vidal y Barraquer (who later refused to approve Franco's policy and therefore was obliged to expatriate himself), courageously fought for freedom, beside the communists and other democrats. And at that time, the French Christian-Democrats (who had not yet become the MRP leaders), beside the French Communist Party, had taken part against Hitler and against Franco.

Now the MRP leaders have become the friends of Franco, but many other Catholics, in France and elsewhere, will not let religion become a screen for fascism and money power. FRANÇOIS CUSTOT.

We profoundly distrust any argument which ingenuously places communists besides "other *democrats." To be democratic is to be opposed to communism... Demagogy and over-fluent talk about "fascism and money power" have long been a screen used to cover united front efforts in behalf of a totalitarian and terroristic system of tyranny thoroughly inimical to man's happiness and proper destiny.*—THE EDITORS.

CO-OWNERSHIP

Lyon, France.

TO the Editors: It is encouraging to learn that in that country supposedly the most negatively "anti"-communistic something is being done to help bring about a renewal of economic life and the attainment of social justice which is both positive and progressive, uncompromising with Communism, and at the same time in accordance with the Church's social teachings. I refer to your frequent plugging for co-ownership, sharing of profits, and owner-worker management in industry. It is unfortunate that Christian Democrats everywhere do not take a greater initiative in this direction, with a more determined, positive program. Instead, in their plans and attempts at social progress the center parties of many European countries continue to stand up for modified socialistic methods, compromises with socialism that usually result in nationalization of industries, or state-ownership, and other purely socialist economic inventions.

I don't know if there are others in America with THE COMMONWEAL's ideas on social betterment. I like to hope that there are. CHARLES FROELICHER.

CO-OPERATION

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: May I follow up the recent article on the co-operation in *Una Sancta* in Germany with the following news taken from the official diocesan weekly of the Diocese of Osnabruck, British Zone, April 25, 1948, p. 68: "The postwar conditions in our country have produced a closer co-operation between the Christian Churches of Germany. From now on there will be two meetings every year between the official and guiding members of the hierarchy and the Protestant Church government. The Catholic chairman for these meetings has been designated: Archbishop Jaeger of Paderborn, while the Protestant regional churches will be represented by Bishop Staehlin of Oldenburg. The first extraordinary meeting will be held in April near Mayence."

The same issue contains a piece of news which is in strange contrast with all I have been led to believe about the Iron Curtain: "The Most Reverend Bishop of Litomeric, Monsignor Trochta, has been invited by (*sic!*) the official Czech Radio (which is, of course, state-owned and controlled) to give radio talks at regular intervals under the title: "This is your Bishop speaking." So far the Catholic Church in the C.R.S. has never had her own program." Is this phoney? Is the Bishop being used the way Hitler used some prominent German prelates to fool the world, especially those who were so willing to be fooled? Or is he not a real Bishop?

The Reverend H. A. REINHOLD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS

HUNGARIAN TENSION

New York, 6/12 (CIP)—Mounting tension between the Catholic Church and the Communist-dominated Government of Hungary is shown in the developing conflict over the school question:

1) The Government's demand for "nationalization" of the Catholic schools seems obviously a move to weaken the influence of the Church. Communist leader, *A. Apor,* declared at a May Day celebration: "We shall not tolerate that the schools turn our children against democracy. The time has come for us to liberate democratic educators from the terrorism of Mindszenty and his associates. . . ."

2) The Catholic Primate of Hungary, *Cardinal Mindszenty,* gave his first public answer, in a Pastoral Letter, May 16: "Our Catholic education is never opposed to the true spirit of democracy. But does liberty exist where Catholics may not have their schools, but where there are State schools by which a party in power, often a minority, can impose its ideology on the children of the majority?"

3) Minister of Education, *Gyula Ortutay,* then sent a letter to the Cardinal, blaming the Church for the nationwide agitation against the school bill, and demanding that "every kind of agitation against Hungarian democracy should be stopped at once."

4) The Hungarian Cardinal issued another Pastoral, June 6, telling Catholics not to listen to Government propaganda in the controlled press and radio. Referring to the "monstrous moral pressure" being exerted, he declared: "To the bitter disgrace of this country, falsehood, deceit and terror were never greater in the course of its history."

EGYPT ORTHODOX SHUN CONFERENCES

Cairo, 6/12 (CIP)—The Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, Egypt, decided unanimously at its spring meeting that neither the Patriarch, His Beatitude *Christophoros II,* nor a delegation of the Patriarchate will be present at the Inter-Church Conferences of Lambeth, Amsterdam, and Moscow.

The Lambeth Conference, held every 10 years at Lambeth Palace, is a gathering of the Bishops of the Anglican Communion, i.e., the Church of England, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and related bodies. The Anglican Churches have made great efforts to cultivate friendly relations with the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

The Amsterdam Assembly is sponsored by the World Council of Churches (in process of formation), which consists mainly of Protestant Churches, but includes some Eastern Orthodox and Old Catholic bodies.

The Moscow Conference has been called by *Patriarch Alexei* of the Russian Orthodox Church as a meeting of Orthodox Patriarchs and Church leaders. Its date has been repeatedly postponed, apparently because so far no Orthodox Church leader from outside the Russian zone of influence has accepted the invitation.

GERMAN "CENTER" AND "CDU"

Cologne, 6/12 (CIS)—New efforts for a merger of the German Center Party with the Christian Democratic Union have been started by the Prime Minister of Northern Rhineland-Westphalia (British Zone), *Karl Arnold,* one of the foremost leaders of the CDU. After an oral discussion with *Dr. Karl Spiecker,* vice-President of the Center Party, he declared in a letter dated May 22 that the word "Christian" in the name of the CDU does not mean that those not joining the party are to be considered as "un-Christian," but that the Christian Democrats want to decide the basic problems of political life in accordance with the principles of the Christian moral law. He expressed the conviction that "all those who wish politics to be inspired by Christian values, by the sources of a genuine humanism, and by the best German traditions and virtues should unite politically and work for the realization of a truly social, democratic and progressive political program."

Dr. Spiecker, in his reply dated May 24, agreed with these ideas. The President of the Christian Democratic Union for the British Zone, *Dr. Konrad Adenauer,* welcomed this exchange. The Information Service of the Center Party, on the other hand, issued a statement to the effect that "all rumors about negotiations concerning a merger . . . are without foundation. . . . The struggle which Prime Minister Arnold is compelled to carry on in his own party for 'a truly social, democratic and progressive political program' is being followed by the Center Party with the greatest attention." In other words, the Center Party would be glad to merge with the left wing of the CDU, of which Prime Minister Arnold is a leader, but not with its right wing.

The Center Party exists only in the British Zone and in a few districts of the American Zone. Though not strong numerically, it prevents the Christian Democrats from becoming the strongest party in the British Zone, where the Social Democrats are stronger than the CDU, but not stronger than CDU and Center combined.

VISITOR APOSTOLIC FOR SAAR

Saarbruecken, 6/7 (CIP)—Great satisfaction is being expressed here about the appointment by the Vatican of a Visitor Apostolic for the Saar Territory. He is the *Very Reverend Michael Schulien, S.V.D.,* born at Altenkessel, Saar Territory, in 1888. His appointment is being interpreted in ecclesiastical and political circles here as a sign that the Holy See wishes to maintain a neutral attitude in the question of the future of the Saar Territory. The Christian People's Party, which holds a majority of seats in the Legislature, as well as the other parties, with the only exception of the Communists, favor economic incorporation in France as well as close political ties with France. The Bishops of Trier and Speyer, on the other hand, to whose jurisdiction the Saar belongs, have strongly stressed "loyalty to Germany." This has led to continuous friction.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Screen

Escape, in Five Easy Lessons

COMEDIES and musicals are also decorating their plots with yesterday's costumes and settings. I'm not sure why producers think that the early 1900s are better than the present; in any case, they have presented us with a batch of new light films that are set in the near past and thus, at least, escape any thoughtful issues of today.

For almost no reason at all, *"Easter Parade"* goes back to 1912 to tell its slight Pygmalion story and to give us some swell musical numbers wrapped in handsome technicolor. Because Fred Astaire is turned down by his dancing partner, Ann Miller, he says he can take any chorus girl and make a star of her. He does—in a series of amusing scenes; but he was fortunate in his choice, who turns out to be none other than Judy Garland, a gal who might have shown promise to even a less-angered dancer than Fred. Once Astaire gets over his pique he does several superior song-and-dance sequences—with Judy, with Ann and alone. My favorite among them is the one in which he dances in slow motion while the chorus carries on in regular time. You'll probably have your own favorite among so many good numbers for which Irving Berlin furnished the music and lyrics (some old, some new). Don't let the plot get in your hair; it ends as you expect when Fred's friend, Peter Lawford, starts getting too interested in the glamor girl that Fred made out of Judy.

For *"The Emperor Waltz,"* Producer Charles Brackett and Director Billy Wilder go back to Vienna under Franz Joseph to tell the story of a traveling salesman and a baron's daughter. Wilder and Brackett, who also wrote the script, have turned out many a good movie, particularly "The Lost Weekend," but this time I'm afraid they have been a little too coy with their satire; and the whole piece which is meant to make delicate fun of the period becomes somewhat heavy and forced before its thin plot winds up in the expected conclusion. However, Bing Crosby, as a 1901 phonograph salesman, and Joan Fontaine, as the countess, won't exactly bore you. Assisting them are some bright technicolor, Richard Haydn as the brusque, sentimental emperor, and several dogs who carry on a love affair that is suppose to parallel the Crosby-Fontaine high-jinks. If you want to, you can find this situation rather vulgar. Then again, if you prefer, you can consider all this a sweet Viennese idyl. The only scene that really amused me is the one in which Bing's dog was being psychoanalyzed by Dr. Zwieback.

A few years ago *"Up in Central Park"* was a rather pleasant musical comedy about New Yorkers in the days of Boss Tweed. Now it is a laborious movie about the same subject but without the light touch that made the play acceptable. Even the music has been cut down considerably. Vincent Price, as Tweed, and Albert Sharpe, as a still-green Irishman, are perhaps a little too good for their rôles, and almost make something serious of what started out being a burlesque of old New York politics. However Deanna Durbin and Dick Haymes take up most of the footage falling in and out of love. See it at your own risk; but be warned: Central Park was never like this.

The popular radio comedian, Henry Morgan, has decided to take a sock at New York too—and on the whole his satire is quite funny, much funnier than the plot of *"So This Is New York,"* which stems from Ring Lardner's story, "The Big Town." Since most of the wisecracks are applicable today I don't know why the time was put back to post World War I. Perhaps so no New Yorkers would be really offended, or perhaps because the costumes of the those days were funnier than they are now. In any case Morgan and his wife (Virginia Grey) come to the big city to find a husband for her sister (Dona Drake). Rudy Vallee, Hugh Herbert, Bill Goodwin, Leo Gorcey portray the various prospects; and whenever the story and their efforts get too dull. Morgan pops up with a bit of satire that wins a laugh.

Veronica Lake and Joan Caulfield, wearing 1895 clothes, look very pretty indeed as *"The Sainted Sisters,"* a couple of con women who land up in Maine and almost take the town before Barry Fitzgerald reforms them. If you don't consider this too seriously, you'll get some good chuckles out of the witty lines put over by these three, the wry humor of Beulah Bondi and the slapstick of William Demarest. Director Will Russell mixes fun, fancy and reality; and keeps things moving at a fast pace. Try it for size. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books

The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943. *Edited, translated, and with an introduction by Louis P. Lochner. Doubleday.* $4.00.

A COMPARISON of this volume with "Vom Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlerei" the diary which Dr. Joseph Goebbels published in 1934, produces two conclusions: (1) It disperses any doubts regarding the authorship of these diaries; (2) it demonstrates the absurdity of the statement on the publisher's blurb. "As he fabricated his network of lies to the German people and to the world by day, he was telling the truth to his diary by night." There is overwhelming internal evidence that Goebbels is the author of these diaries. Every page shows his style, his way of thinking, his shrewd maneuvering, his art in the distortion of facts. There is not the slightest justification for the assumption that one of the greatest liars in the world's history should have become a fanatical truth-seeker in those few minutes every day which he spent on dictating his diary.

The original, several times more voluminous than the more than 500 pages translated by Mr. Lochner, fell into American hands after a junk dealer had carted it away from the courtyard of the Berlin Ministry of Propaganda. The Russians apparently tossed these papers, with many others, out of the window, showing interest only in the filing cabinets which contained them.

Mr. Hugh Gibson, in his "Publisher's Note," mentions evidence showing that Goebbels was in debt to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nazi Party's Publishing Company (headed by Max Amann, Hitler's drill sergeant in World War I, and owned jointly by Hitler and Amann) to the amount of 226,583.69 marks, which he had drawn as advances against future royalties. Strangely enough, neither Mr. Gibson nor Mr. Lochner seem to have noticed the obvious relationship between these debts and the "Diaries." Amann was no philanthropist nor a special friend of Joseph Goebbels, but a hard-headed businessman. As he lent Goebbels money for his life of luxury and his expensive amorous adventures, he could be expected to demand payment in full. Since the "Kaiserhof" Diary had been the most successful of Goebbels's books, from the point of view of sales (this reviewer's copy bears the imprint "261st-280th thousand"), Amann apparently was interested in more books of this type. The writing of his diary was a chore for which Goebbels was being paid by Amann. Mr. Lochner mentions that Goebbels apparently never looked at his diary once it had been typed according to his dictation. This would seem to show that the diary was not meant to be a sentimental, "intimate" and "truthful" record for his own peace of mind, but raw material for books, one out of many tools in his quest for power, money, and fame.

Obviously Goebbels could not have planned to publish his diaries as they were, but was aware of the fact that they would have to be edited in accordance with whatever would be the party line at the time of publication. The "Kaiserhof" Diary, which gave a day-by-day report of events from January 1, 1932, to May 1, 1933, had shown that he was quite good at such a job. The "Kaiserhof" book contained vitriolic attacks against Gregor Strasser, who at the dates under which Goebbels listed his comments was still the Chief Organizer of the Nazi Party, ranking immediately after Hitler. It is quite probable that the "original" diary contained sharp criticism of Goering, Streicher, Rosenberg, Roehm, Feder, etc., as well, but that unfriendly remarks were eliminated because these leaders were riding high in the Nazi hierarchy when Goebbels published his book, while Strasser was helpless; he was assassinated by Hitler's and Goering's thugs a few weeks after the appearance of the book.

It is now know from many sources that during the war Hitler became thoroughly fed up with many of his lieutenants, including Ribbentrop, Ley, Darré, and Rosenberg, and with most of his generals. There would certainly have been a purge in the Nazi Party if Hitler had won the war. In such a case, many of the "deep secrets" in the Goebbels diaries would have been ripe for publication. On the other hand, Goebbels could not know whether Goering, whose power had been declining since 1941, would eventually be "purged" as a "traitor" or reestablished in his role as a national hero. Goebbels was prepared for both possibilities, mingling in his diaries praise and basest flattery with criticism and ridicule. By blue-penciling either the former or the latter, Goebbels could easily adapt the diary to whatever would be required at the time of publication.

The fact that the diaries contain nothing but praise and admiration for Hitler does not necessarily prove anything about the intimate thoughts of the author. It merely shows that Goebbels knew that his fate was inextricably linked with that of the founder of the Nazi movement and that, in the case of Hitler's defeat, his own career would be finished.

The best proof that these diaries are not an "intimate" and "truthful" record of the author's life and innermost thoughts is furnished by the fact that all through these hundreds of pages Goebbels plays the comedy of a faithful husband and father while in fact his love affairs with a number of women, including the film star Lyda Barova, were notorious and he lived mostly separated from his wife. Any mention of Hitler's Eva Braun is also avoided in the diaries.

Many of the "revelations" of these diaries are undoubtedly true. Some Nazi schemes are described with remarkable frankness, e.g. Hitler's plans to annex large parts of France, especially Burgundy, and Goebbels's proposal to annex large parts of Italy, especially Venice. In some matters, Goebbels apparently was more realistic than other Nazis, for instance when he demanded more food and clothing for the slave laborers (to make them cooperative), when he suggested in vain, against Rosenberg's violent opposition, that people in the Nazi-occupied parts of the Soviet Union be offered land and freedom of religion (to win them for the German cause), and when he opposed Hitler's plan to have German troops occupy Vatican City (because of the indignation which this would stir up all over the world).

On the other hand, the diaries contain entries which are obviously false, for instance the one on March 3, 1943: "I learn that the Pope intends to enter upon negotiations with us. He would like to get into contact with us and would even be willing to send incognito to Germany one of the Cardinals with whom he is intimate."

Goebbels boasts in the diaries that he deliberately "planted" items of false information in the German and foreign press. There are indications that he used his diaries for the same purpose. That Mr. Lochner has not remained completely immune against such attempts, may be seen from his comment on p. 252: "The Mr. Cohn here referred to is better known by his pen name of Emil Ludwig." In reality, Mr. Ludwig's father changed his name to Ludwig in 1883, when Emil Ludwig was 2 years old. It has been his legitimate name ever since.

★

In his Introduction as well, Mr. Lochner appears to have been too much impressed by Goebbels's boastfulness, for instance when he writes (p. 12): "He spoke night after night, edited his paper, attended to a multitude of details of political organization, and still found time with Gregor Strasser to start the *National-Sozialistische Briefe* (National Socialist Letters)." This is legend, not history. When the semi-monthly "Briefe" was founded (July 1925), Goebbels had no paper to edit and had few speaking engagements; organizational matters were attended to by his boss, Gregor Strasser. Mr. Lochner's reference to a "Goebbels-Strasser duumvirate" is greatly exaggerated. Goebbels was Strasser's employee. Only after his break with Strasser and his entrance into Hitler's service was Goebbels given organizational assignments. One of the reasons for which Hitler sent him to Berlin in November, 1928, was the fact that he knew Gregor and Otto Strasser and could be expected to keep an eye on their activities in Berlin where they were publishing at that time a chain of 7 Nazi weeklies, among them the *Berliner Arbeiterzeitung,* following a "socialist" line.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Introduction and the notes for this book have obviously been prepared in a hurry. I did not try to count the inaccuracies, but their total is undoubtedly very high. To give just a few examples: It is not correct that the Nazi SD (Security Service) was part of the Gestapo (it was part of the SS storm troops), that ex-Gauleiter Kube was "one of Hitler's earliest disciples" (he fought the Nazis as a member of a rival racist group until he joined them in 1927), that De Valera became Prime Minister of Ireland in 1937 (the correct year is 1932). Walther Rathenau was no *von*. The palace on Peacock Island, where Mr. Lochner attended a Venetian Night organized by Goebbels, cannot possibly have been "erected in 1794 for Frederick William III" (who ascended the throne only 3 years later). It seems very unlikely that Mr. Lochner had the talk with Captain Roehm, which he describes, in 1930, because Roehm spent that entire year in Bolivia, returning to Germany only in January, 1931. Most of these inaccuracies are unimportant in themselves, but their large number impairs the value of the book.

Many of the notes produce confusion rather than clarification. On p. 419, for instance, where Goebbels describes a conversation with Himmler about the conscientious objectors among the International Bible Students, the only comment needed would have been that the sect is now known in its country of origin, America, as Jehovah's Witnesses. Mr. Lochner, however, states: "The International Bible Students were a small sect claiming to be serious searchers into the verities of Holy Script." Has he never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses?

In the Introduction, Mr. Lochner mentions several of Goebbels's books, omitting, however, the most important one, and the only one in diary form, "Vom Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlei."

Unquestionably the Goebbels Diaries are of immense interest for students of history. In the perspective of recent events, most of the falsehood which they contain is obvious for everyone. Such is not the case for all of it, however. The critical reader will do well to keep in mind that he is handling poison.

WILLIAM SOLZBACHER.

A Long Fourth and Other Stories. Peter Taylor. Introduction by Robert Penn Warren. Harcourt. $3.00.

THESE STORIES deal with the South, but not with the people and parts we know already from Faulkner and Caldwell or even from Porter and Welty. Taylor's people are more town than country, neither high nor low, the divided middle, Southerners all—some remembering, some forgetting—the way things were, but it's all trimmed down to the present. Even the military men: one is a Colonel, but from the Spanish American War. Another has become a Scoutmaster "to preserve those honorable things which were left from the golden days when a race of noble gentlemen and gracious ladies inhabited the land of the South." This is something new, at least to me, on the South.

For the good writer of fiction desiring to be widely read—poets necessarily know better—there is always the temptation to imagine things into a too-coherent mass, to make false currency of his private insights, his only fortune as an artist. By touching the common nerve with a timely or useful tract, he can trick his readers, even himself, into believing the truth about everybody is in him. And failing success, he can always settle for unpopularity as though it were voluntary—splendid unpopularity.

Peter Taylor has nothing to do with all this. He will not fit into any of the familiar categories of writers successfully tempted. If Taylor even remembers, he refuses to tell a story the way it was told before. He refuses, moreover, to exploit his material to the limit, to manufacture characters, drama, suspense—in short, he won't traffic in what is known as a "strong story line." He refuses to be electric. He knows that life itself has a very weak story line. To render it truly he distils it, though again not as you might think: his work is not remarkable for its form and conciseness. He likes to take a while to get a story underway. He has a feeling for naming his characters. He has the poet's gift for finding the clichés of a nation and getting his characters to say them so that they almost sound like something else (as when one uses them oneself).

In "The Fancy Woman" I saw the descendants of the settler-fundamentalists traveling light, womb to tomb, in cream convertibles—which is not the story. These Southerners are somehow more devastating than the New Californians who, on the conservative estimate of Evelyn Waugh, are a good ten years ahead of the rest of the country in their materialism.

In "Sky Line" Taylor explores a memory of boyhood—the kind of boyhood which still had something to do with Mark Twain and Booth Tarkington, though Taylor goes deeper than that. The neighborhood rather than the world was all, and the atomic swell guys and gals of the radio and movies were not yet coming through the doors and windows.

"A Spinster's Tale," which is the story of a little girl, struck me as absolutely unique. I thought the title strange, especially so as I began to read, but when it was all over, the title itself, I saw, continued the story and suggested in three words a lifetime and final end for the little girl.

The title story tells the most about the North and the South, the abiding concern of each for the sins of the other, and incidentally about Taylor as a writer. He lets the girl from New York (on a visit to Nashville) say some fine things about equality, economic and social, meaning the Negro's, but he also informs us that she edits a "birth-control magazine" and has legs like two fire-plugs. On the other side, the local belles deliver some gallant lines in behalf of the Confederacy, but they, like the New York girl, do not seem as good as their words. "Son," their brother, home from New York where he has been reading "The Decline of the West" and getting "advanced ideas" in the publishing business, is decent enough to keep his mind to himself in the presence of the home-folk. The mother, through whom, significantly, Taylor chooses to tell the story, is baffled by the new conversation: her daughters "told her that Son did not believe in marriage and that he certainly would not subject his family and the people of Nashville to the sort of thing he did believe in."

The characters do not speak as types in a problem novel. They do not take turns talking and the question, by sociological standards, doesn't get a very good airing. There are more people than there are theses to go around. It is a proof of Taylor's art, then, that the people don't fade and run together. Ultimately, they all quiet down and the question ends not as theory, where it began, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as a part of them they can't very well talk about. The honest ignorance, the pervading indifference, the righteousness on both sides all combine to defeat them. The awful weather of futility precipitated by the unnatural act of discussion sets in, and behind them stands the same servant Negro, at once strong and hollowed out from centuries of being looked after by these same Samaritans.

In his Introduction to the collection, Robert Penn Warren says of Taylor's first stories which came to him in manuscript: "They were obviously the work of a very gifted young writer who had a flavor and a way of his own. . . . I have said that Peter Taylor has a disenchanted mind. In terms of his very disenchantment, however, he has succumbed to the last and most fatal enchantment: the enchantment of veracity. And that is what, in the end, makes the artist free."

Those who want the most fiction can give, who expect to read things they hardly knew they knew—to experience the shock of recognition—will enjoy Peter Taylor and remember these stories. J. F. POWERS.

Our Plundered Planet. Fairfield Osborn. Little. $2.50.

POOR Average Citizen. His longing for peace after the defeat of Germany and Japan has been jolted by Soviet ambitions; still he has hope that the atom bomb, Mr. Marshall and any number of unforeseen factors will solve that. Then peace? Not if he reads "Our Plundered Planet." There is another war, "the silent war, eventually the most deadly war . . . bringing more widespread distress to the human race than any that has resulted from armed conflict. . . . This other war is man's conflict with nature."

The title is the clue to the thesis. It is man who is the enemy, the plunderer. Nature is the dove of peace, with whom we must cooperate if we are to survive. Mr. Osborn shows how precarious is the hold of living things on the planet. Backed with statistics he presents the problem of the pressure of increasing population and the limit of arable land, especially in two of the three great clusters of population: the China-Japan and the India-Ceylon areas. He does not directly enter the neo-Malthusian controversy but concentrates on the record of how man's neglect and wastage of soil contributes to the peril. Since "life begets life" and man is at the end of the process, dependent upon animals and vegetation which in turn are dependent upon soil, he thinks it clear what will happen to us if we don't mend our plundering ways. In case there are those who don't know the record, he concludes with a skimming summary from continent to continent of man's destruction of natural resources through the ages. It is the story of starving people, forced migrations, and buried cities in deserts, with only a rare example of lands improving rather than deteriorating under man's stewardship.

Mr. Isborn's book is aimed to shock and instil fear, and there's little doubt but the treatment is needed. Perhaps no people have ever been so wastful of their natural resources as we in the United States. The federal government's land policy, admirable from the standpoint of providing a democratic basis to society by disposing of small acreages at low cost, violated every tenet of conservation. From the Northwest Ordinance through the Homestead Acts there were no provisions for game and water reserves, for selective cutting of forests, for withholding sub-marginal land from use or guaranteeing graz-

B. ALTMAN & CO.
FIFTH AVENUE MU. 9-7000

FROM OUR

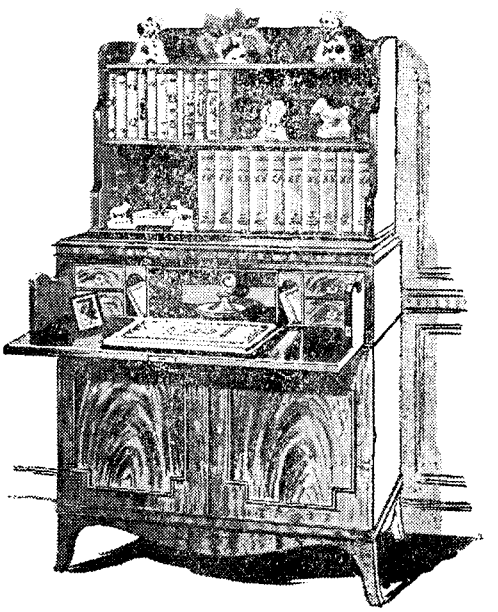
BEACON HILL COLLECTION

MIDDLESEX

COMMODE-BOOKSHELF

This handsomely-proportioned, trimly spacious commode-bookshelf of the period 1810 was taken directly from an old English Regency design. It typifies the enduring designs and unusual pieces for drawing room and libraries, in our Beacon Hill collection. **425.00**

Altman Beacon Hill Galleries, seventh floor



Taken from page 103 of our Beacon Hill book

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing land against the plow. Worst of all there was a haughty disdain for the ancient methods of the peasantries and boastful assertions of our unlimited resources. We knew we were wasting and we did not care. Things have improved in the past three decades. The Department of Agriculture, once as oblivious to the waste as the nation's citizenry, undertook a tremendous erosion reconnaissance survey in 1934. In the light of the startling results (61 per cent of the nation's cropland damaged and in need of rebuilding) it is bringing publicity, advice and techniques to the farmers who have to do the job. A current bibliography on soil and forest conservation would fill a book, but most of the literature is too dry and technical to make a city mouse nibble. Mr. Osborn has sprung the trap. The bigger the catch, the better the future of conservation.

A short book covering the whole of history must necessarily be dominated by the broad generalization. But there is a limit, and unfortunately Mr. Osborn is not often aware of this restriction. It is difficult, for example, to press the story of evolution and anthropology into two dozen pages without causing some wonder, and so it is with much of his evidence. A little salt sprinkled on "Our Plundered Planet" would improve the flavor. The conscientious citizen is hereby warned that no solutions, beyond exhortations, are offered. There is, however, no immediate necessity for panic. You can't do much by yourself anyway. Just make sure your congressman does not vote to clip the authority of the Soil Conservation Service by making it subordinate to the already overextended Extension Service. If your income is large enough, you might join the Friends of the Land. And no matter what your income, send a contribution to the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

EMERSON HYNES.

Lenin. David Shub. Doubleday. $5.00.

IT IS CUSTOMARY of persons who need but little prompting to indulge in invective at the mention of Stalin's name to be more charitable when Lenin's name comes up. The general impression under which they labor is that, somehow, Lenin was different. Indeed, they are quite apt to go off into panegyrics at the mention of the leader who banished Kerensky. All this, of course, is sheer sentimentality, or, at best, self-deception. People have a good time imagining things. They even fondly imagine that an atom bomb is worse than a bomb dropped from a B29 plane. If such be the case, then Stalin is worse than Lenin. Shall we, then, who worship efficiency, maintain that Lenin was the better man because he was less efficient? God forbid.

All these super-chefs, these Marxes, Lenins and Stalins, who stoutly maintain that you cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs—whence perhaps arises the appellation of "a good egg" or "a bad egg" as applied to a man—they are, after all, agreed on one subject, that it is highly important to make an omelet of men and women, with children thrown in for good measure, who venture to hold the foolish belief that they are not eggs but human beings with certain inalienable rights as such.

What emerges from Mr. Shub's able and well-documented biography is that Lenin, for all the adulation rendered him by well-meaning persons who ought to know better, was in fact tarred with the same brush as Stalin who, as his successor, merely bettered his instruction, even as Lenin had bettered the instruction of Marx. The Russians are better informed on this matter than we are; hence, the perfectly logical appellation they have given the prevailing state of affairs. In Russia they refer to the system as "Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism," an appellation which implies not only a parellelism, an inclusiveness, but also a progression. Such is the paltry trinity to which men are asked to do obeisance, or else—But we come back to the omelets!

All Lenin had to do was to put a cross on a list of names of fifteen hundred "vicious counter-revolutionaries" supplied him by Dzerzhinsky, head of the Cheka, to have the lot of them sent to kingdom come. Once he made a mistake—the cross was intended for something else—and the hundreds went to kingdom come just the same! Lenin did not lose any sleep over the "misunderstanding." It was not exactly cruelty. It was something worse—callousness. "We have no need for justice now," as he once said. In general, he had a contempt for what he called bourgeois ethics. "From now on," he proclaimed in 1918, "the hymn of the working class will be the hymn of hate and revenge, even more terrifying than the hymn of hate that is sung in Germany against England." "Ours is a new morality. . . . To us everything is permitted. . . . " he wrote the same year. Again: "We repudiate all morality which proceeds from supernatural ideas or ideas outside class conceptions." At another time he boldly declared himself to be "a barbarian," and exulted in the fact.

If I have stressed this aspect of Lenin, i.e., his attitude to culture and morality, it is because, in the final analysis, it is by these things that he must be judged, even as in a court of law, it is often the single admission that condemns a man. Admirers of Lenin, who are not Communists themselves, and often enough liberals indeed, must accept this phase of him as well as those which sound more innocuous. Lenin, to be sure, had such virtues as could not be overlooked. For one thing, he would not permit demonstrations of adulation. He did, first and foremost, put his heart in his cause, the cause of those he thought he was helping; the indubitably immoral conceptions he held of evil means to serve supposedly good ends, were an outgrowth of this fantastic zeal. It was in this respect that he towered above his successor who, from the first, has courted power and a devotion, an adoration, which belong to God alone. Mr. Shub's biography of the Bolshevik leader should be read in its entirety. It is vividly instructive, and salutary.

JOHN COURNOS.

The Living Is Easy. Dorothy West. Houghton. $3.50.

RICHARD WRIGHT'S and Ralph Ellison's violent accounts of Negro life in this country are the natural, passionate outgrowths of the lowest levels of race prejudice; "The Living Is Easy" shows the effects of a different level, the level at which conformity, not rebellion, and the fear of losing hard won status, not the refusal to accept wrongs, create a class which, at its worse, is the enemy of its race, and, at its best, its uncertain fulcrum. Miss West's Negroes of early Twentieth Century Boston have become snobbish and cautious not because of free forebears who were only respected head servants, but because of men, living and dead, who achieved economic independence and respect as small business men. In the easy by-ways of that post-bellum Abolitionist city,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they and their families became bourgeois. The ironic theme of the novel is the distintegration wrought by a poor outsider from the Deep South, who aspires to be more middle class than any of them. In Cleo Judson, Miss West has created a woman smitten by the virus of Agrippinas of all races, the predatory female on the loose, a wholly plausible, tentalizing creature. There are some loose places in the framework of the book, but the style has a professional, ready grace, and there is nothing "stock" about the characters. Indeed, in her first novel, Miss West displays all the talents of a highly competent writer.

FLORENCE CODMAN.

Tobias Brandywine. Dan Wickenden. Morrow. $3.00.

MR. WICKENDEN, not without cunning, has provided a ready-made answer for any captious person who might feel an obligation to patronize his novel as a wholesome confection. Gladys, his young bluestocking, whose career we follow from unconscious Gothic parody to mature writing, is encouraged to argue that "tragic endings are so much easier to think up" than happy ones. "Tobias Brandywine" betrays no horrid labor in the composing; all is ease of incident and characterization. Life is seen as it is recorded in Miss Emmy's diary; nothing is tragic and important, and nothing is unimportant.

Despite the solid décor surrounding the Windrow family in their ancestral town of Wanhope, the accent is on ambiguity. Mr. Brandywine is not really named Brandywine; and although he slips into being old Senator Windrow's manservant, he is not quite servant nor yet friend of the family, but both. Is Miss Emmy destined to remain a spinster? Would Crispin Flannery look better without his beard? Will Cedric ever summon up the nerve to travel or marry? Which is the face and which is the mask? Everything, Mr. Wickenden appears to be saying, seems solid and normal and real; yet the most wildly romantic things are going on in staid minds and trammeled hearts. Now all this is neither new nor crushingly important, but here, engaging and free of the coy and simpering, is the art that conceals nature.

RILEY HUGHES.

The Moment, and Other Essays. Virginia Woolf. Harcourt. $3.00.
The Common Reader. First and Second Series in One Volume. Virginia Woolf. Harcourt. $4.00.

VIRGINIA WOOLF, in all her work, was an impressionist. More than that, she most resembled the particular group of Impressionist painters who called themselves *pointillistes*. Just as they set little dots of pure color side by side, trusting to the eye of the beholder to blend them, so she set down her little observations side by side on the page, relying on the reader's imagination to blend them into coherent character-patterns. It is this technique of hers which makes the reading of her novels such a difficult and rewarding activity; she employed exactly the same technique in her biographical sketches and critical pieces.

Take her "Notes on D. H. Lawrence" in "The Moment"; she picks up his "Sons and Lovers," reads it, and jots down her impressions as she goes along. A valid critical method, perhaps, but rather irritating to the reader. Her character sketches are much more satisfying, because there she performs, in part, the task which

Ellin Berlin

author of
LAND I HAVE CHOSEN

brings you the story of Veronica Reardon—lovely daughter of a warm-hearted "lace curtain" Irish Catholic family—and her struggle to save her marriage to a Protestant. It's a story of plush and prejudice which begins in the New York and Long Island of a generation ago.

Lace Curtain

Just published, $3.00

An inspiring novel about the immortality achieved by seven men who fought at Monte Cassino—and of the mysterious eighth who joined them. By the author of *The Labyrinth* and *Victoria 4:30.* . . . "A book of absorbing human interest, of deep spiritual beauty, and of great historic worth."—CARDINAL McGUIGAN, *Archbishop of Toronto.* $3.00

Eight for Eternity

by Cecil Roberts

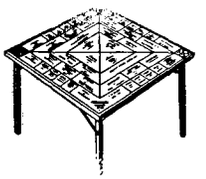
Wherever books are sold

DOUBLEDAY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Quick, Easy Way To Clear $100.00 CASH And Get 24 Card Tables

Free!



Advertising spaces are sold by your Group to merchants sufficient to cover one table. These ads are printed identically on all card tables and given to your Group.

SEND
FOR DETAILS AND SAMPLE PAPER TOP

T. S. MacAlister, 213 S. 4th St., Darby, Pa.

Name .....

Address .....

City .....

Name of Organization .....

Send a medical kit to some needy Missionary for an offering of only $30. Address the Rev. Edward F. Garesche, S.J., President, Catholic Medical Mission Board, 10 W. 17 St., New York 11, N. Y.

she normally delegates to the reader of her novels. The character may be one she has known in life, or one she has discovered in some obscure volume of biography. Her subject or his biographer throws out a remark here, a phrase there, a snatch of conversation, a characteristic action; Mrs. Woolf seizes on them, juxtaposes them, and suddenly the pieces interlock—the jig-saw puzzle is completed. Out of all sorts of odds and ends she has miraculously created a living, breathing person.

Anybody who wants to understand how a novelist creates character should read such studies as "Sterne's Ghost," "Mrs. Thrale," "Edmund Gosse," "Genius: R. B. Haydon," "Ellen Terry," and compare them with the official biographies or the biographical sources used by Mrs. Woolf. I don't agree with Mr. Woolf, who claims in his introduction to "The Moment" that the standard of achievement in the new volume is as high as that in "The Common Reader." But one is glad not to have missed some of the pieces mentioned above.

The new combined edition of "The Common Reader" lacks the glamor of novelty for many of us. But what pieces in it does one wish to re-read? Obviously, those of the type that appealed to one in "The Moment." The Duchess of Newcastle, Laetitia Pilkington, Miss Mitford, Jack Mytton, Dorothy Osborne, Beau Brummell, Mary Wollstonecraft, Dorothy Wordsworth, are all pressing forward—mostly women, mostly obscure. Virginia Woolf made real people of them, once upon a time, and one cannot forget them. Best of all is "Dr. Burney's Evening Party," which might be a big scene out of a Woolf novel, except that it all really happened 170 years ago. But then, the people in her novels are real, too.

VIVIAN MERCIER.

From the Ashes of Disgrace. Admiral Franco Maugeri. Harcourt. $4.00.

ADMIRAL MAUGERI can write. The Italian naval trade school at Leghorn turns out civilized officers; not mere technicians. He gives an adult account of Italy on the eve of war, her defeat, her co-billigerence, her postwar miracle of reconstruction. "From the Ashes of Disgrace" is personal history. Maugeri tells about his life in the Italian Navy; his participation in the war against the British as a combat and as an intelligence officer; his organization of an underground intelligence service directed against the Nazis; and his rebuilding of the port of La Spezia. Americans who would like to understand Italians better should place this book on their summer list. Its that informative and exciting.

JOSEPH M. CALDERON.

CONTRIBUTORS

Eric GILL (1882-1940) was a sculptor, letterer, tyre designer, engraver and author.

Christopher EMMET is a New York author and radio commentator active in many public causes.

William SOLZBACHER is a member of the CIP News Service in New York.

J. F. POWERS is the author of "Prince of Darkness and Other Stories" and has recently been awarded a Guggenheim Scholarship.

Emerson HYNES teaches at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn.

John COURNOS is an author and anthologist.

Florence CODMAN is a New York critic.

Riley HUGHES teaches at the Foreign Service School at Georgetown University.

Vivian MERCIER is a teacher at Columbia University.

Joseph M. CALDERON is a New York attorney.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED